

CONFIDENTIAL

7 April 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Office of the Director

SUBJECT:

The Current Digest of the Soviet Press

25X
1

1. Attached is a draft reply to Mr. Willits' letter to the Director of 2 April 1954. I have tried to give it a tone sufficiently enthusiastic so that the Rockefeller Foundation will be encouraged to continue support of the Digest, but not so enthusiastic as to suggest that the Agency might wish to take the project over. I understand that we were requested to lend financial support to the Digest about two years ago.

2. The Director may be interested in the following facts concerning the Agency's use of the Digest:

a. We have 61 subscriptions, which cost us about \$1600 a year.

b. Apparently all copies are used intensively. The Library has a continuous battle to keep its four sets on the shelves.

c. Some off-hand opinions indicated that the Digest might duplicate the products of the Foreign Broadcasting Intelligence Service and the Joint Press Reading Service (Moscow), but on examination it was discovered that these three services complement each other and do not cause any uneconomical duplication.

d. Staff members of the Office of Scientific Intelligence say that the scientific coverage of the Digest is obviously not handled by persons who know science. They also state that the occasional statistical inaccuracies are probably due to typographical errors rather than bad translations. Such inaccuracies are

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

sufficiently rare so that I did not feel we should comment on them in the letter to Mr. Willits.

e. One person consulted estimated that it would cost us from \$50,000 to \$100,000 to replace the Digest if it were cancelled. Another stated that the Digest represents the only comprehensive picture of current Soviet political trends for use to future historians who may wish to evaluate the political developments of our age.

[Redacted]

Coordinator
External Research/OIC

Attachment

OIC [Redacted] (7 April 1954)

Distribution:

2 - Addressee

1 - [Redacted]

1 - OIC (file) ✓

25X
1

CONFIDENTIAL